

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 05487 062056Z

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SNM-02 AID-05 DEAE-00 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8697

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

PANCANAL

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 5487

DEPARTMENT PASS DEA

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, XM

SUBJECT: DETECTOR DOG TRAINING - LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL

CENTER: QUERIES

REFS: A. STATE 182037, B. CARACAS 4570

1. REFTELS EXPRESS INTEREST OF U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE AND DEA
CARACAS IN PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF "DETECTOR DOG" TRAINING
CAPABILITY FOR LATIN AMERICA. AS WELL, THEY SUGGEST CZ AS
POSSIBLE SITE OF TRAINING CENTER. REF. (B) REQUESTED EMBASSY
TO CALL MEETING OF DEA/PANAMA, EMBASSY, AND SOUTHCOM OFFICIALS
TO DISCUSS PROS AND CONS OF PROPOSAL AND OF CENTER'S LOCATION.

2. EMBASSY AND DEA/PANAMA OFFICIALS MET LAST WEEK TO MULL
OVER PROPOSAL PRELIMINARY TO REQUESTED MEETING. WE PLAN TO CALL
MEETING SHORTLY, BUT SUGGEST THAT PROPOSAL, AS IT NOW STANDS,
IS SO VAGUE THAT OUR DISCUSSION OF IT COULD ONLY BE SUPERFICIAL.
WE RAISED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, AND WOULD APPRECIATE U.S.
CUSTOMS' THOUGHTS ON THEM.

3. (A) WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE FACILITY: (1) TO TRAIN

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PAGE 02 PANAMA 05487 062056Z

HANDLERS ON A CONTINUING BASIS IN LIEU OF NATIONAL

FACILITIES; OR (2) TO TRAIN TRAINERS FOR EMPLOYMENT
IN NATIONAL CENTERS? IS IT ASSUMED THIS WOULD BE THE
ONLY CENTER IN THIS AREA OR WILL EACH COUNTRY BE ENCOURAGED
TO DEVELOP ITS OWN FACILITIES?

(B) IS THERE A REGIONAL DEMAND FOR DETECTOR DOGS? IF SO
WHAT IS IT?

(C) POSITING A DEMAND, WHAT WOULD THE TRAINING FACILITY'S
VOLUME PER ANNUM BE? (FYI: WE GATHER USEFUL LIFE OF
DETECTOR DOGS IS 2-3 YEARS. HENCE TURNOVER WOULD APPEAR
TO BE HIGH.)

(D) WHAT FACILITIES WOULD A TRAINING CENTER NEED FOR
OPERATION, I.E., HOW LARGE AN AREA, WHAT CONFIGURATION,
DORMITORIES FOR HANDLERS, ETC.

(E) WHAT ARE THE EXPENSES? INITIAL OPERATION WOULD BE BY
U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE, SUBSEQUENTLY, LATIN AMERICANS WOULD
BE IN CHARGE. HOW EAGER WOULD LATIN COUNTRIES BE TO
ASSUME COSTS? WOULD OTHER ALTERNATIVES (I.E., STATE-SIDE
TRAINING) BE MORE ECONOMICAL?

(F) WHY THE CANAL ZONE? WHAT ARE THE GEOGRAPHIC, TECHNICAL
OR STRATEGIC REASONS WHICH ARGUE FOR A CENTER IN PANAMA?
WOULD THE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES HAVE POLITICAL
RESERVATIONS ABOUT TRAINING IN THE CANAL ZONE PENDING A
NEW TREATY ON THE CANAL? WHAT EFFECT WOULD THE NEW
CANAL TREATY HAVE ON THE TRAINING CENTER?

(G) DOES OR DOES NOT DETECTOR DOG TRAINING SMACK OF POLICE
DOG OR RIOT CONTROL DOG TRAINING? WOULD SUCH A PROGRAM
INFRINGEMENT ON THE CONGRESSIONAL INJUNCTION AGAINST PUBLIC
SAFETY TRAINING? WHAT ARE THE COSTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS
TERMS OF ITS EXPLOITATION BY ANTI-U.S. GROUPS, ESPECIALLY
OF A FACILITY IN THE CANAL ZONE AT THIS TIME?

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